Dutch glory and downfall

according to Johannes Vermeer

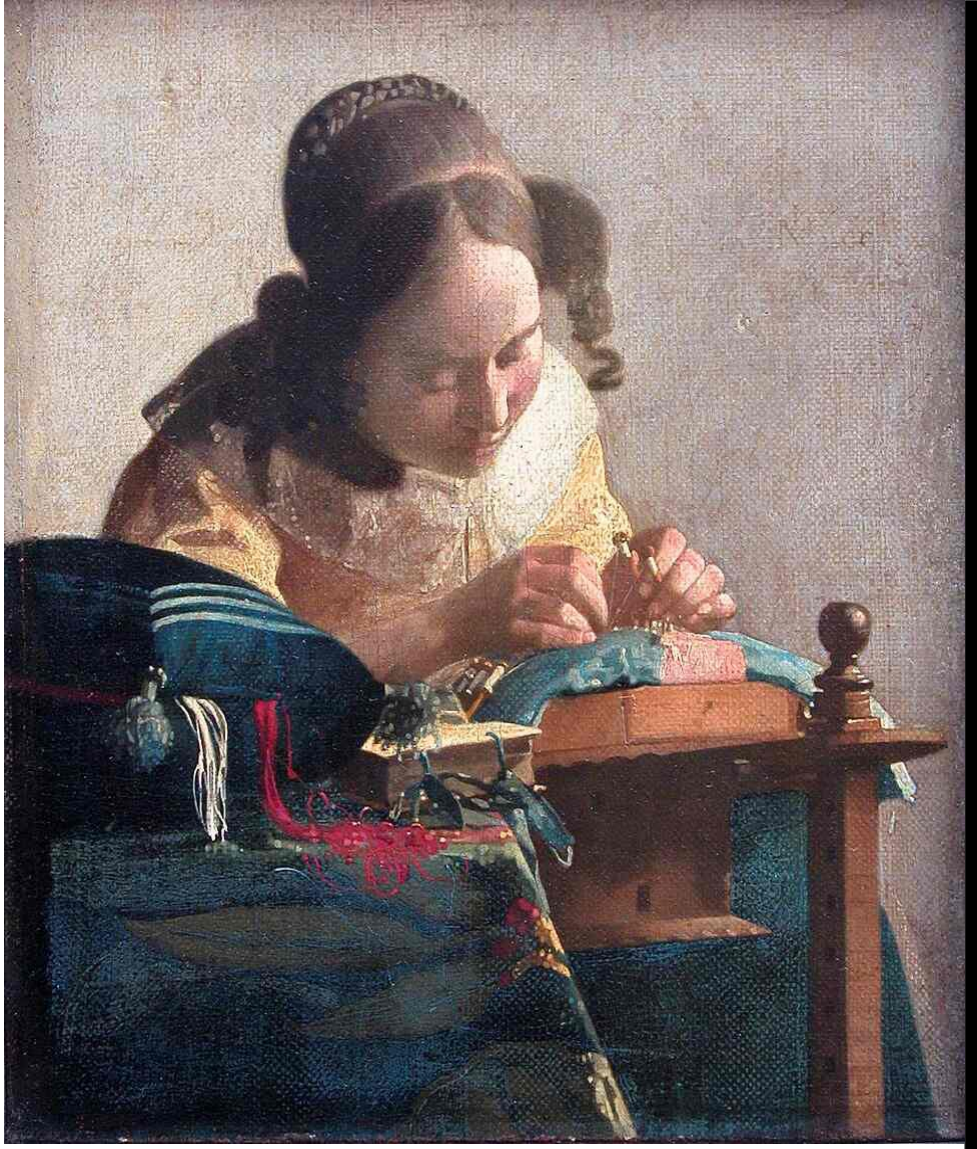
Adapted pdf version (scrollable frames) of
the video with the same title, available at

https://archive.org/details/c2_20260417

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dutch_glory_and_downfall_according_to_Johannes_Vermeer.webm

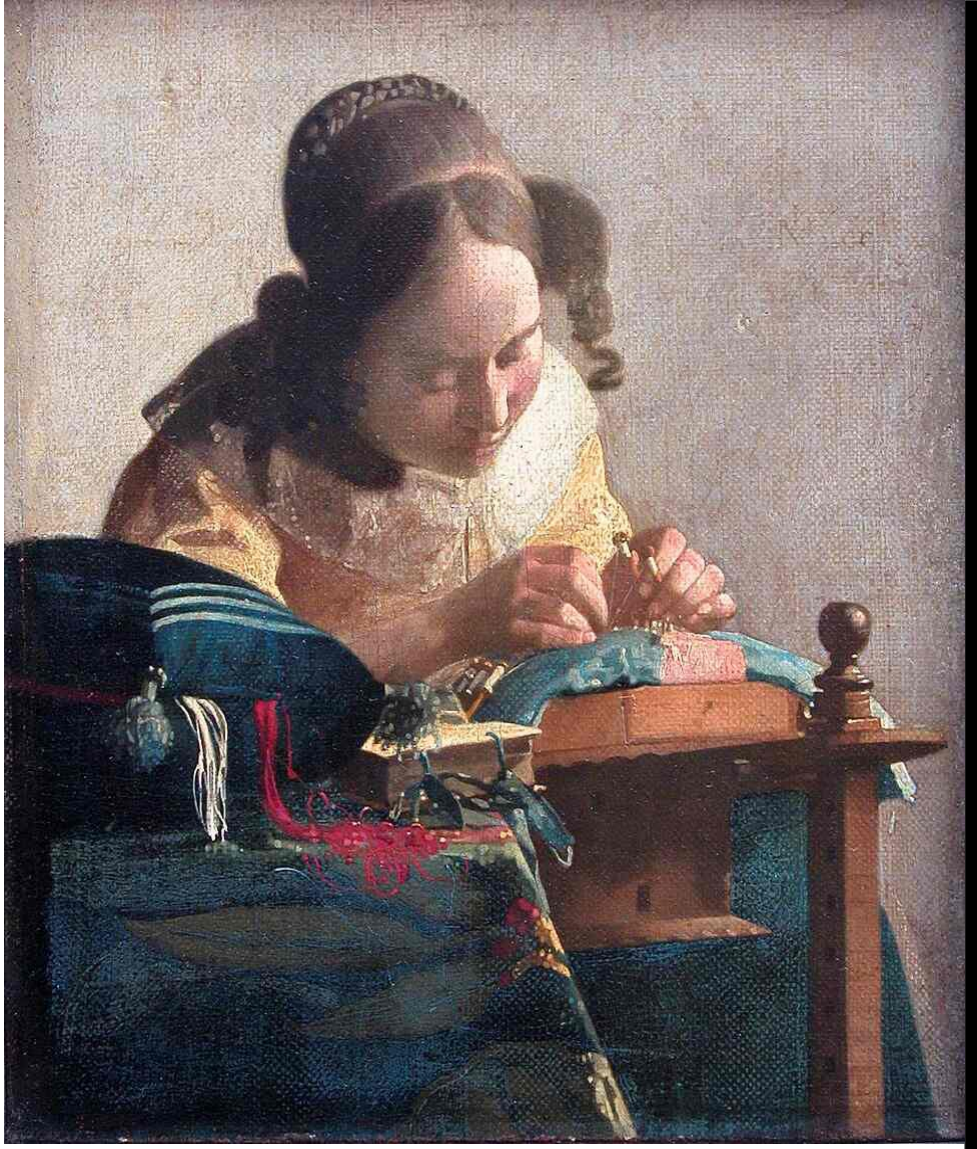
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7SP2MoEkag

OCTUPUS
PMO



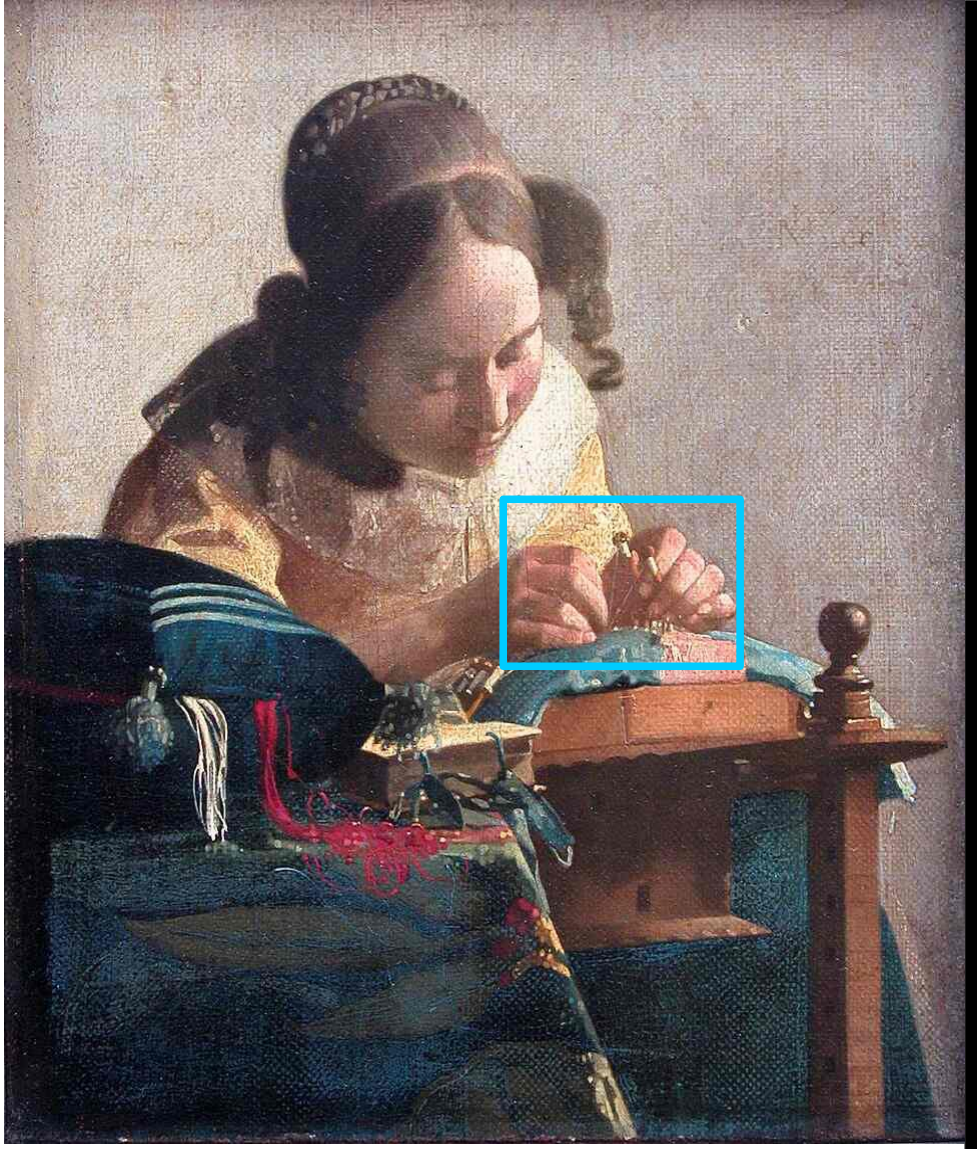
Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

In the 17th century, the young working woman was a conventional allegory for the Dutch nation itself.



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The nation is composed of Protestant and Catholic Dutch acting together.

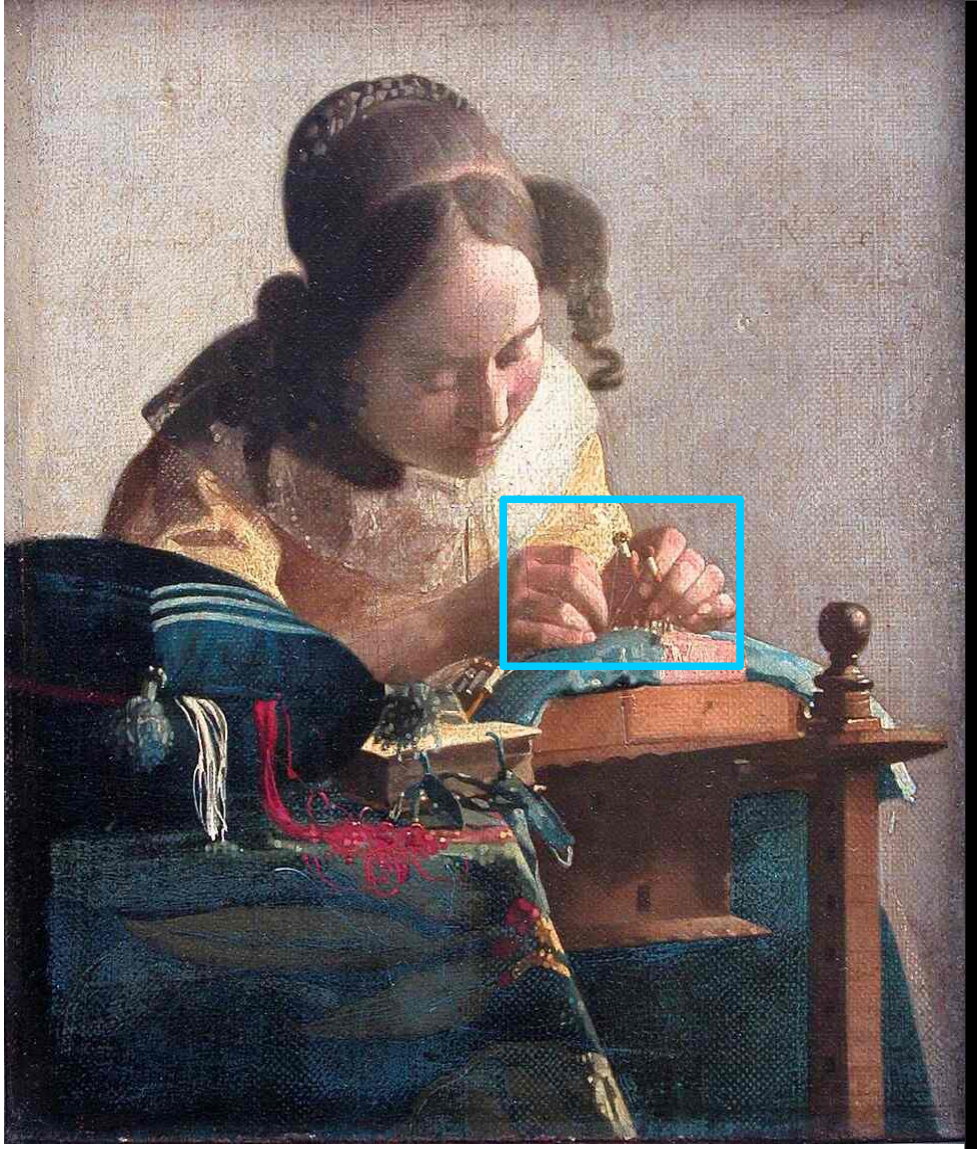


Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The nation is composed of Protestant and Catholic Dutch acting together.

Rembrandt, *The Night Watch*, det.

≈

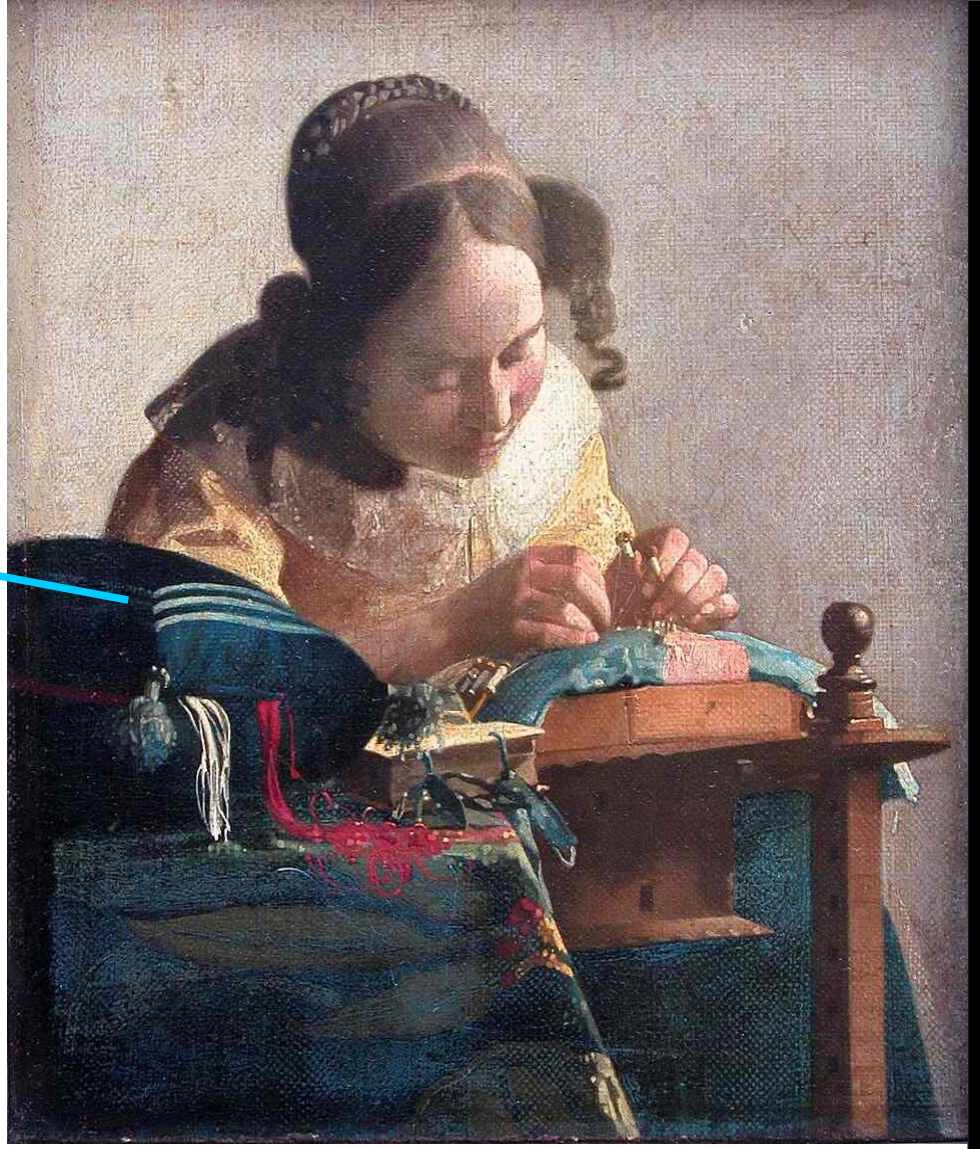


Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The plentiful cushion
symbolizes Dutch wealth.

The three stripes
suggest the Statenvlag.

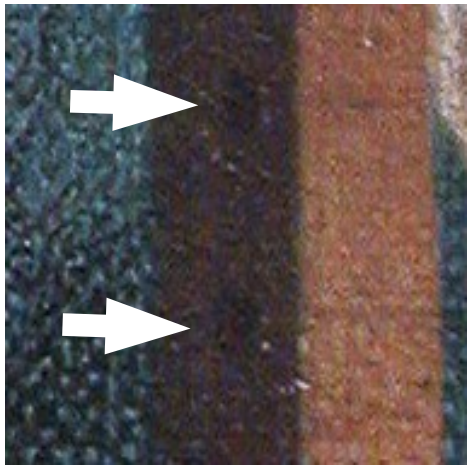
Peter van der Velde,
Raid on the Medway, det.

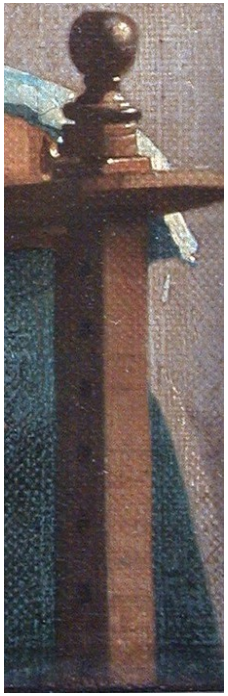


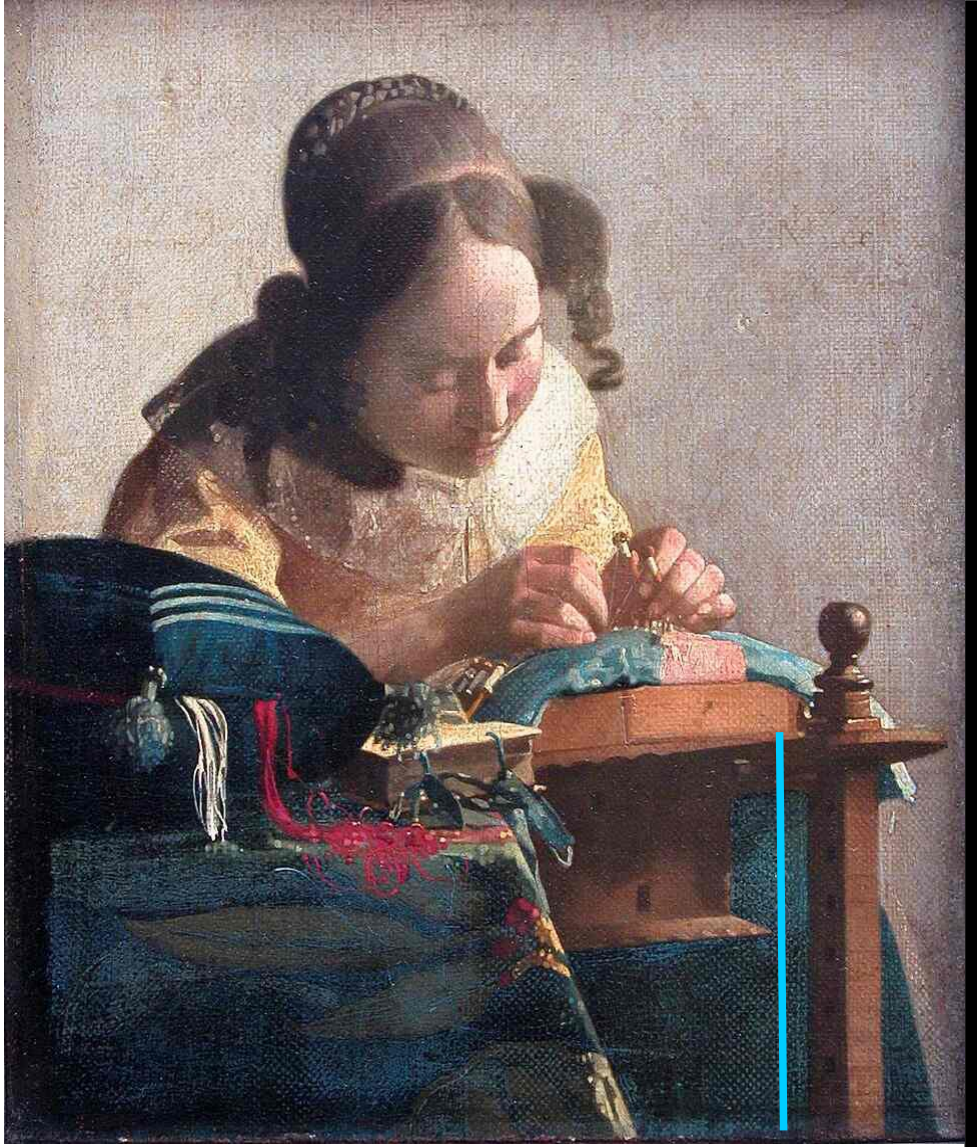
Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The vertical stand has seven slots, representing the Seven United Provinces.

In detail, two of the slots.

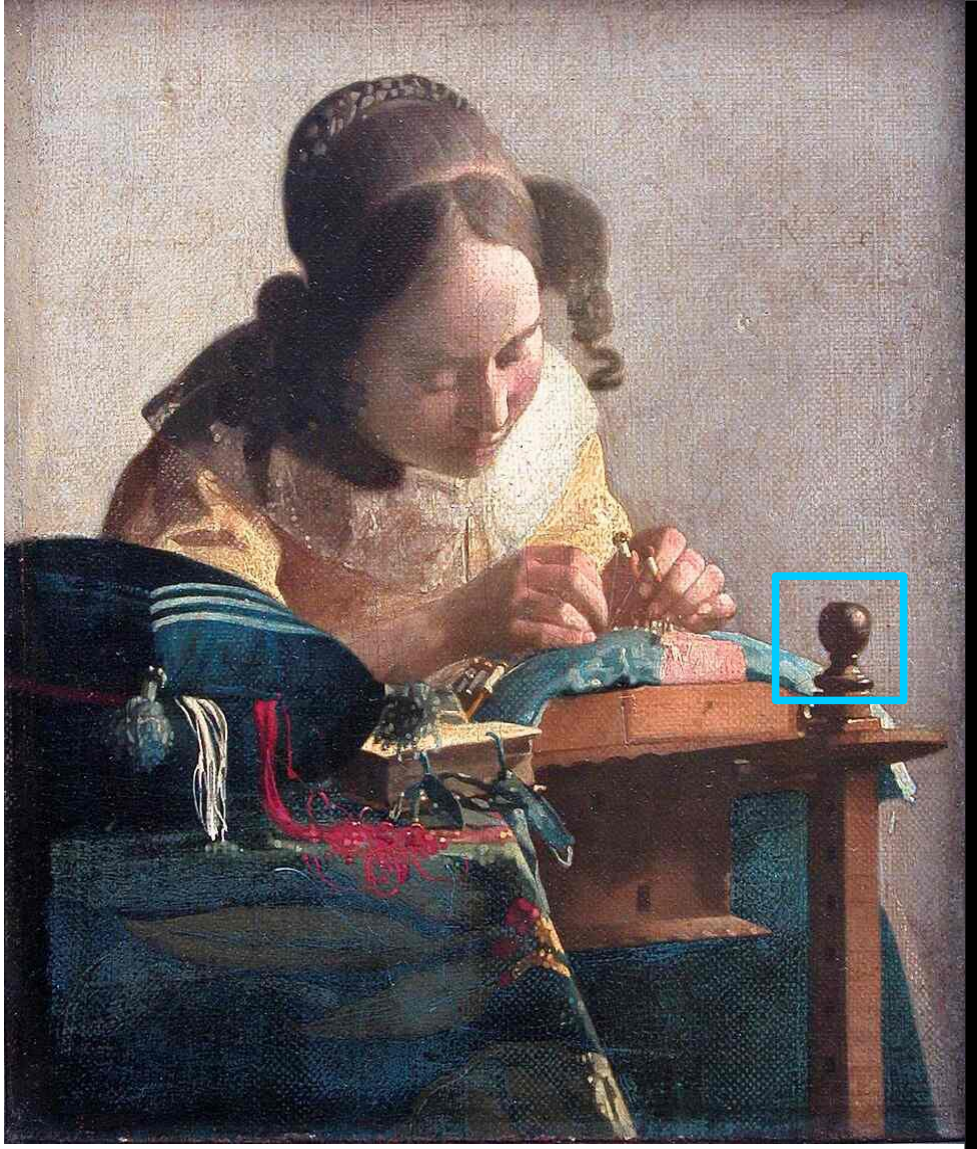






Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

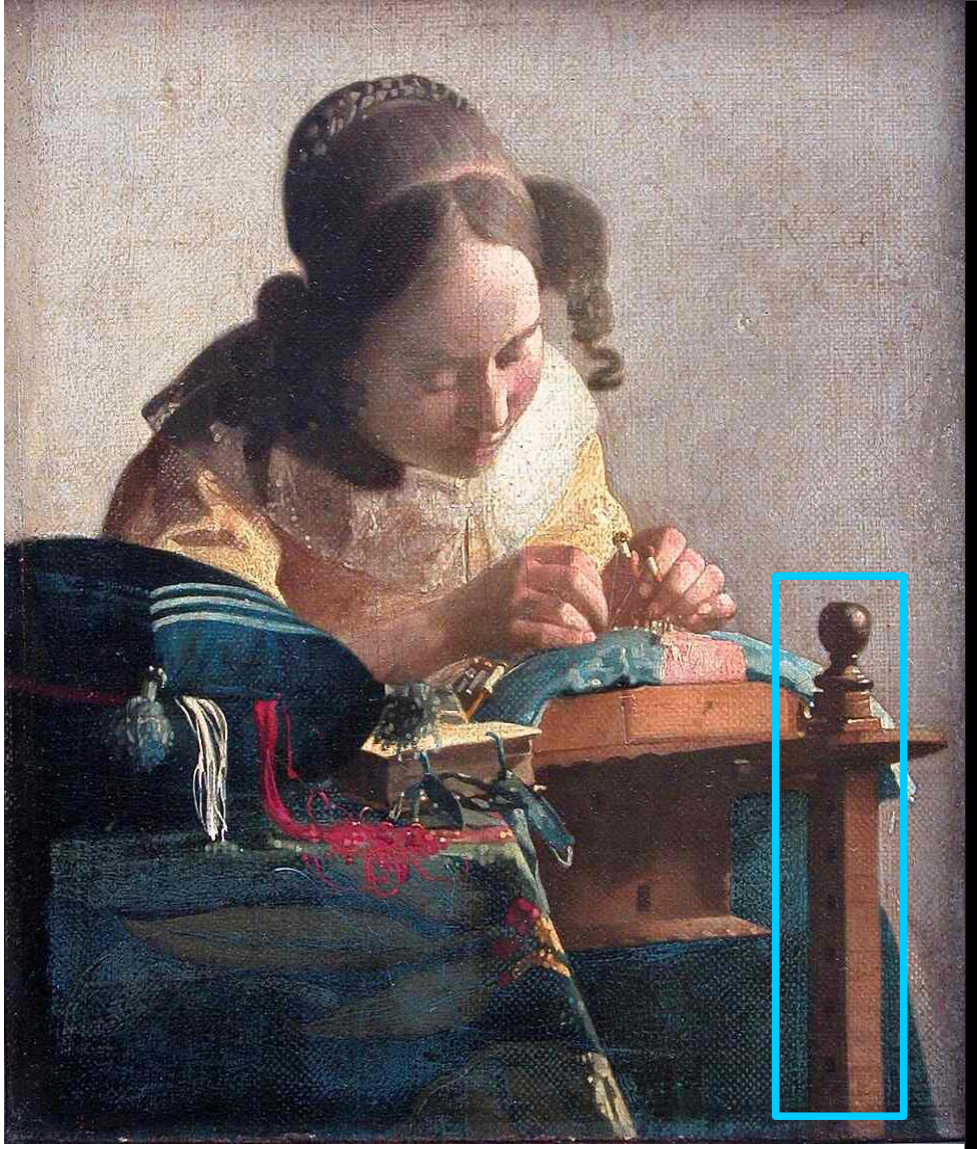
The vertical support is topped by a suggestion of a sinaasappel (orange).



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The structure alegorizes
a marshal's baton.

Marshal's batons



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

William of Orange, by Antonio Moro

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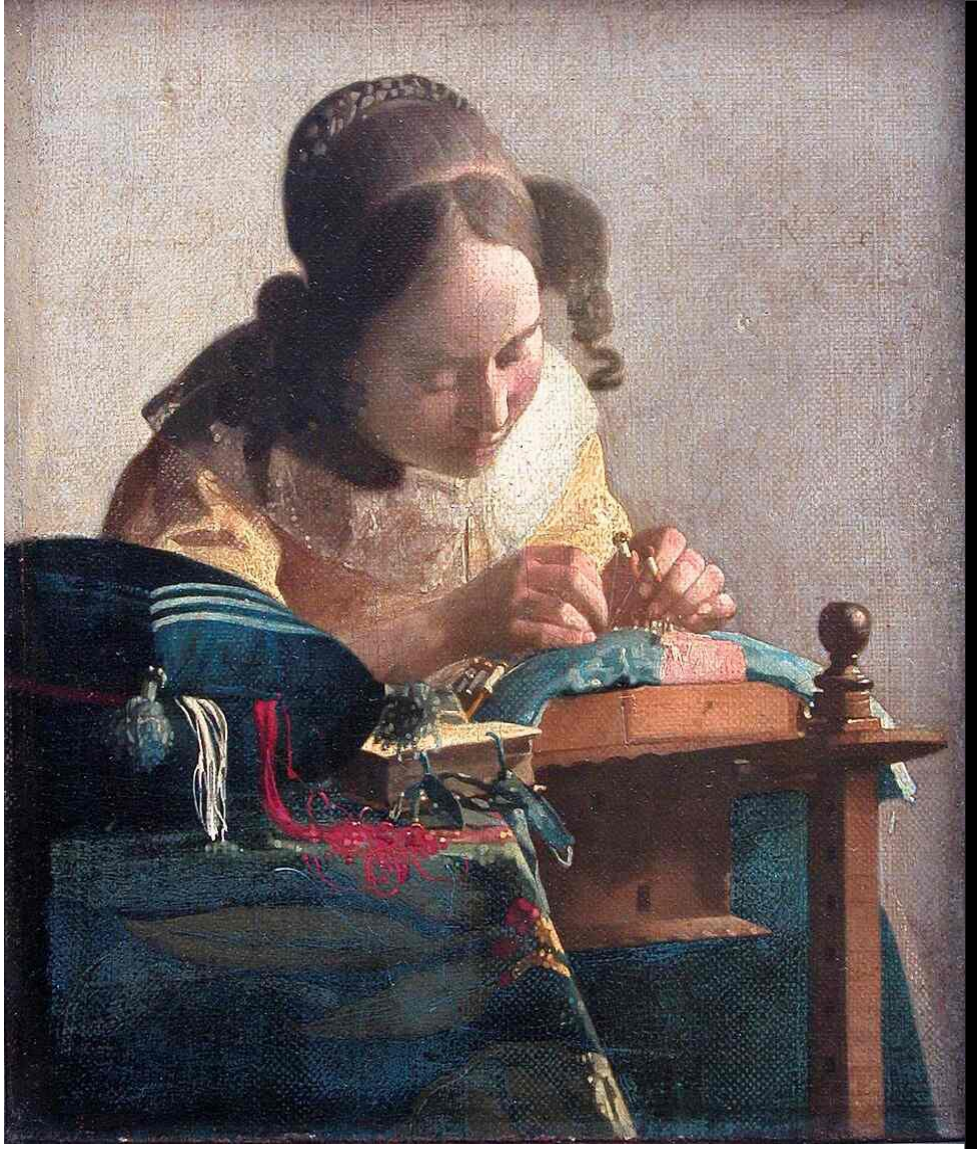
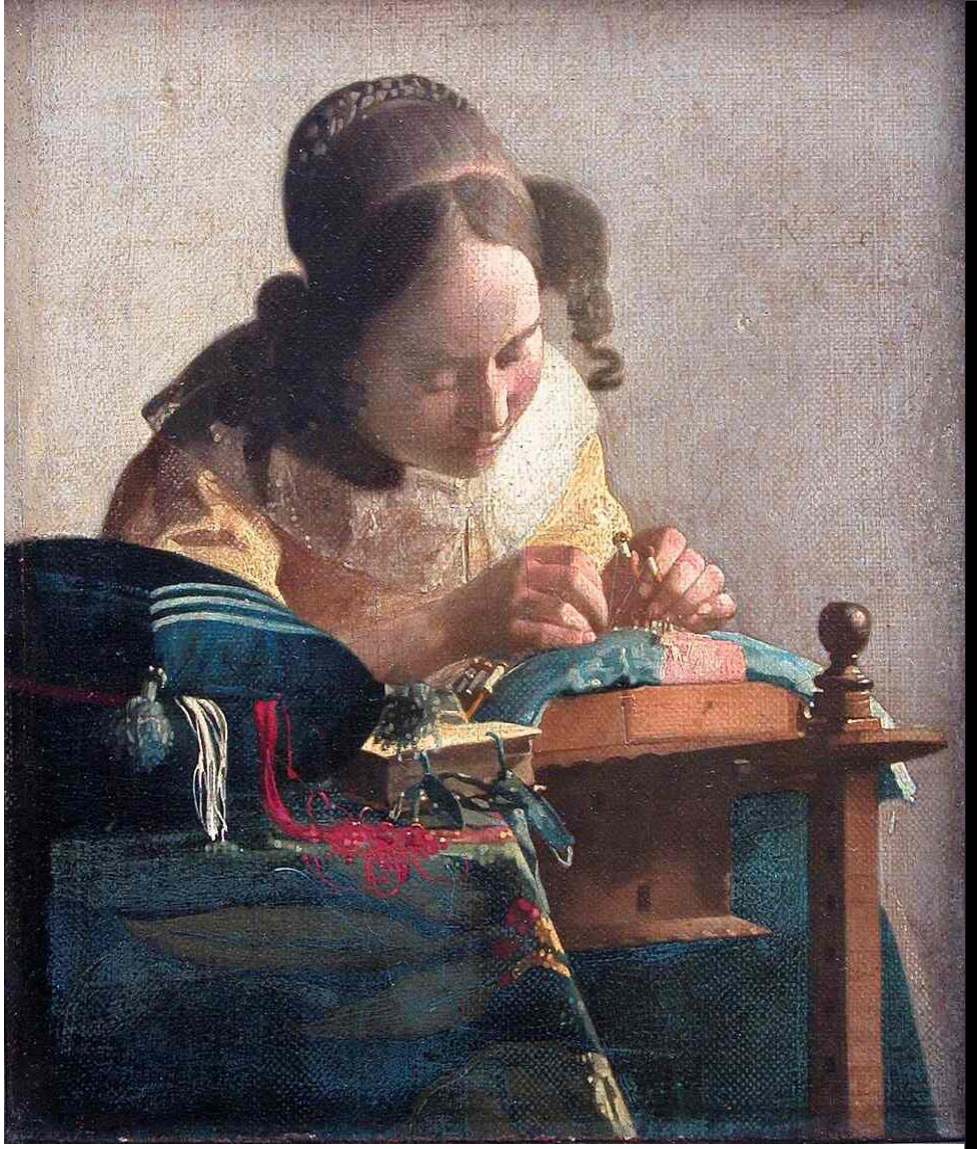


Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

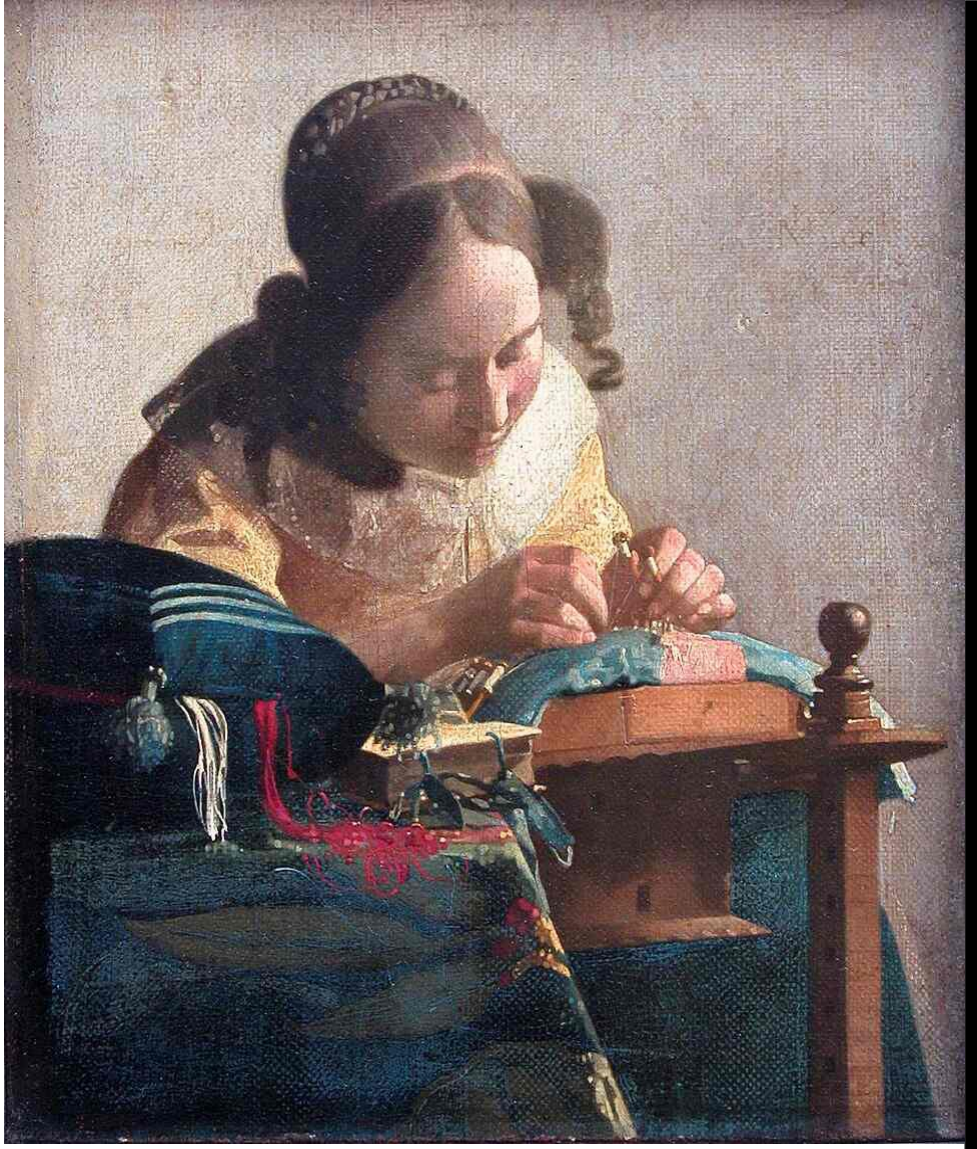
However...



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

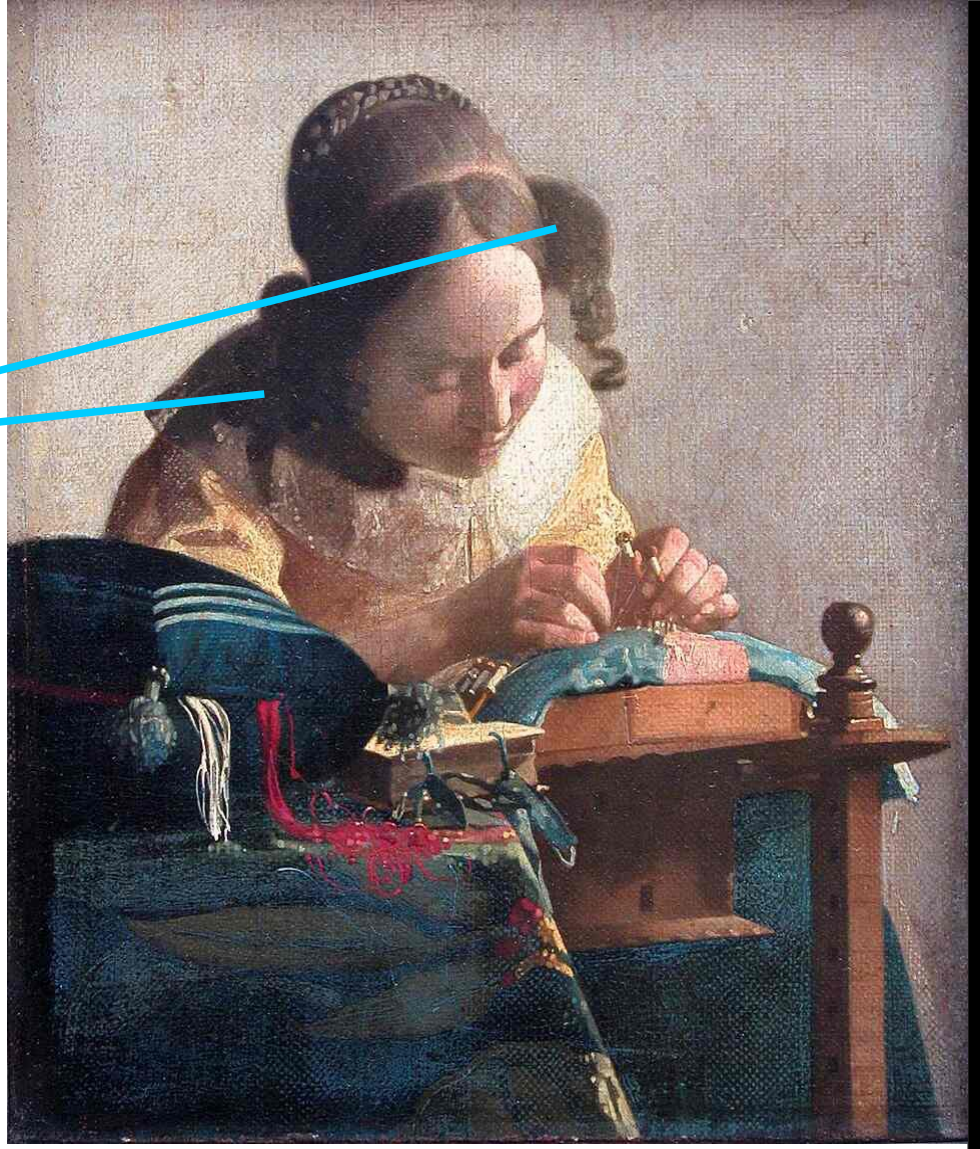
The young woman is completely absorbed in her work, which is unwise.

Discreetly and without anyone noticing, the nation is threatened.



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

First by the internal enemy, i.e. traitors and corrupt individuals.



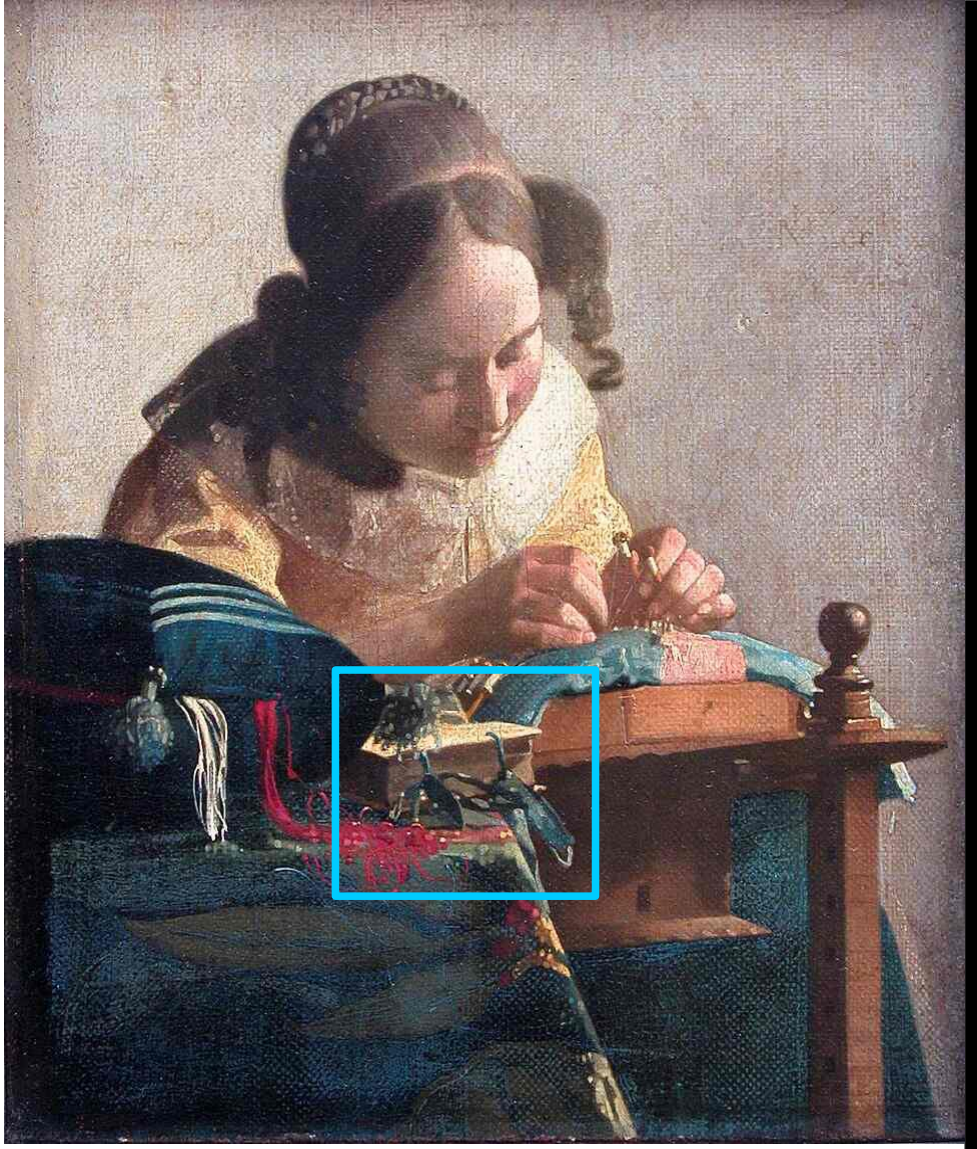
Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

a snake hissing

a lizard crawling down

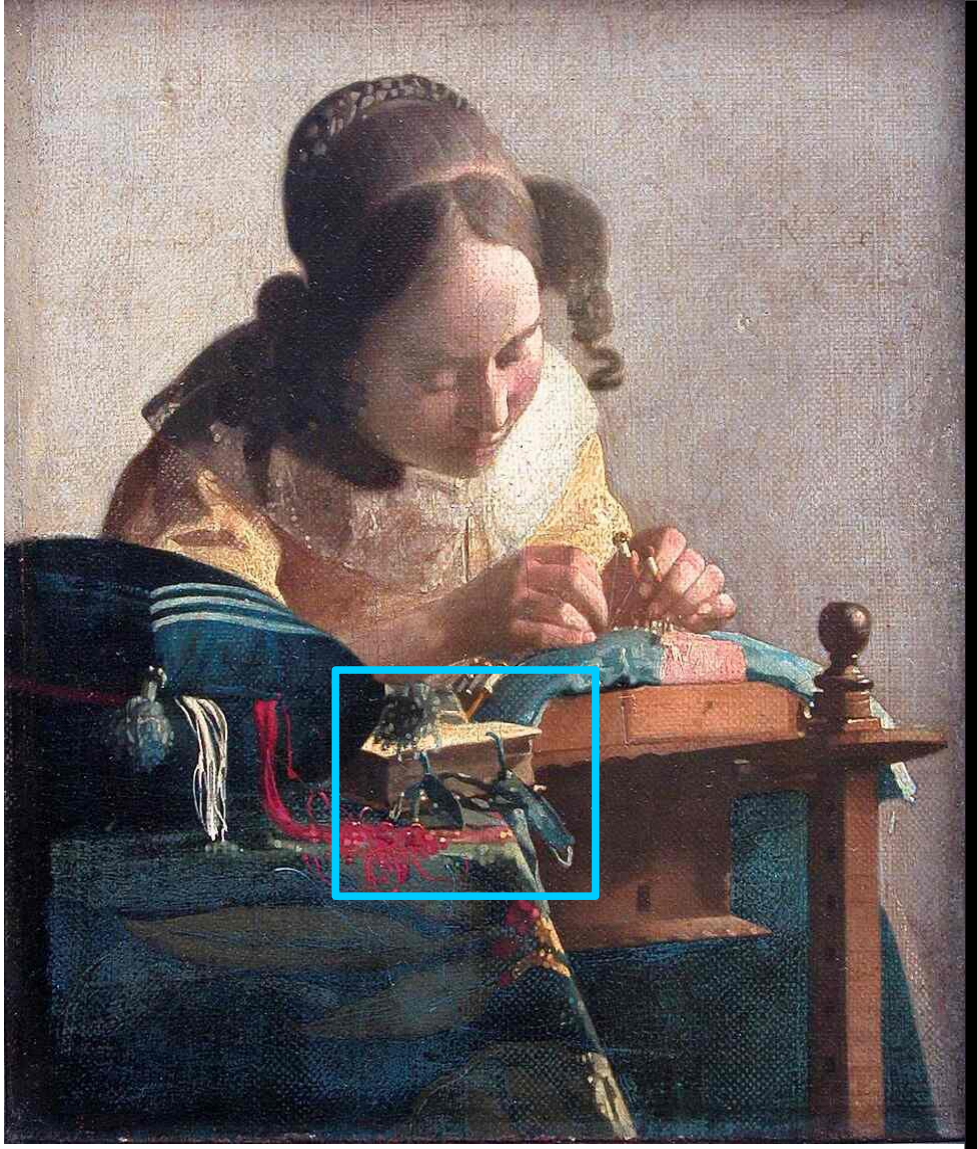
These traitors will collaborate with external enemies who intend to destroy the tolerant nation and seize its wealth.

invasive insects crawling upwards



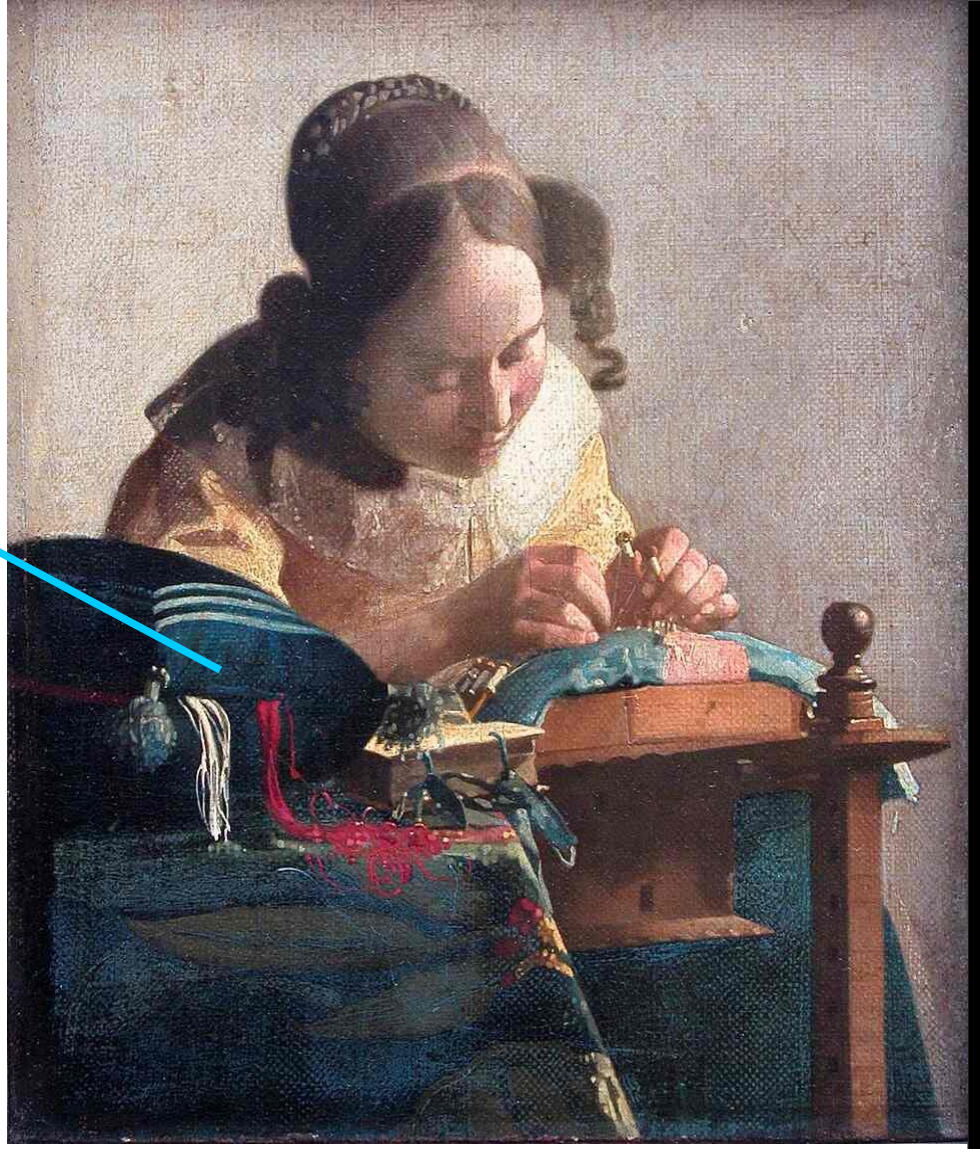
Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

The menacing Louis XIV of France



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

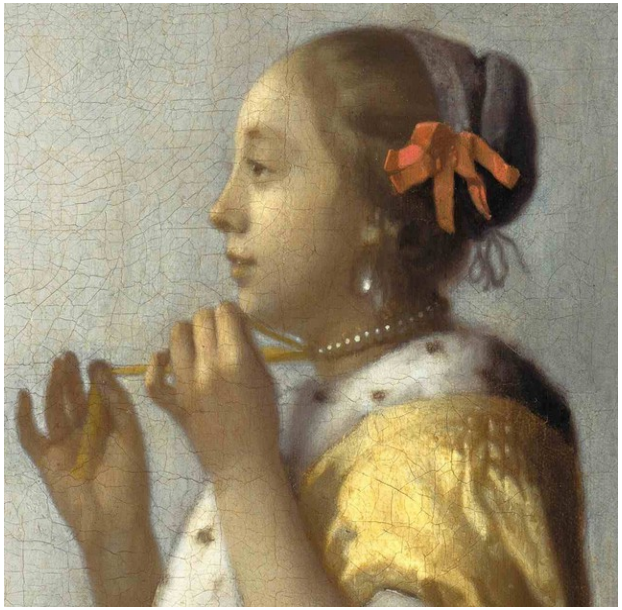
The nation risks bleeding its own blood and milk.



Vermeer, *The Lacemaker*

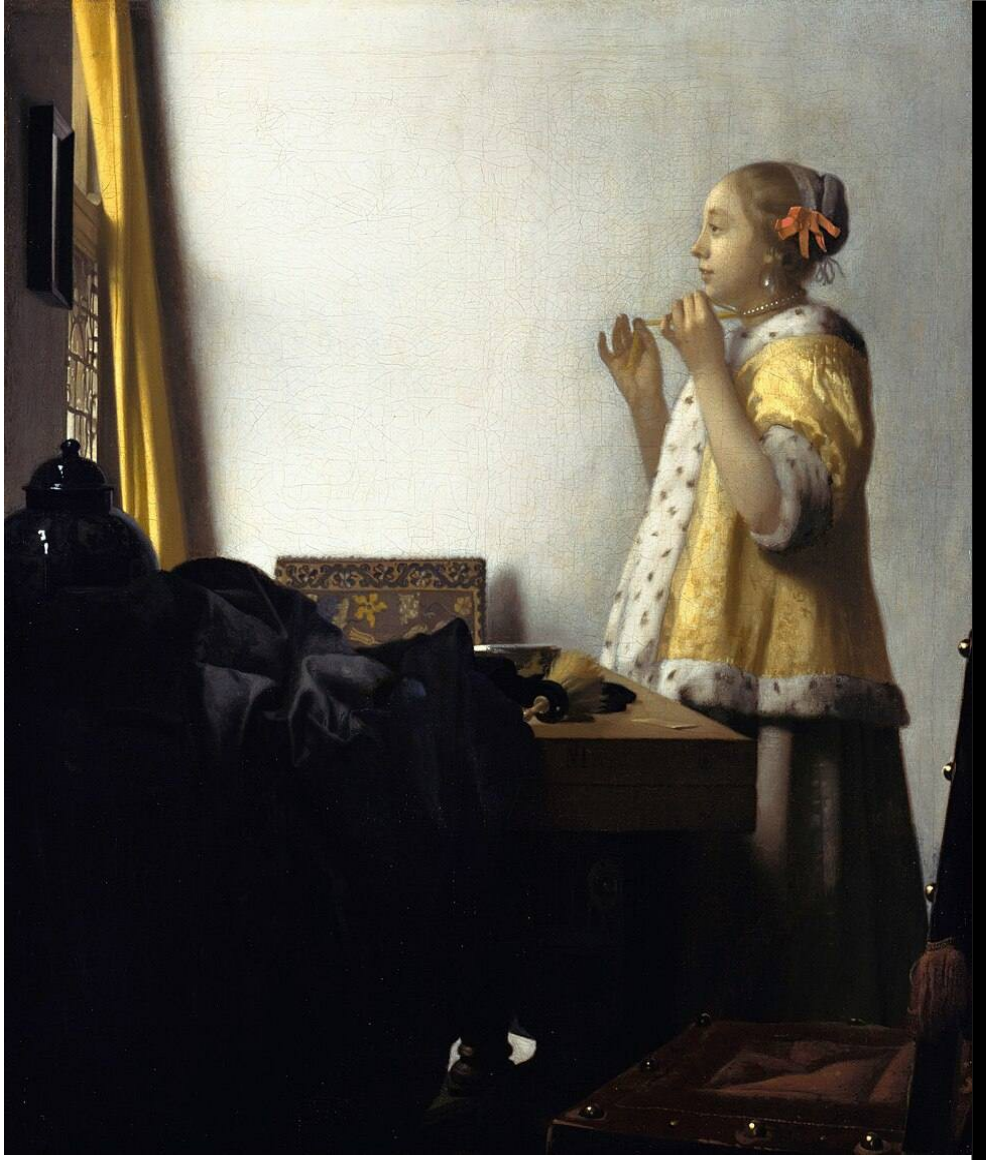
Vermeer, *Woman with a pearl necklace*

The nation has become irresponsibly dissolute...



Vermeer, *Woman with a pearl necklace*

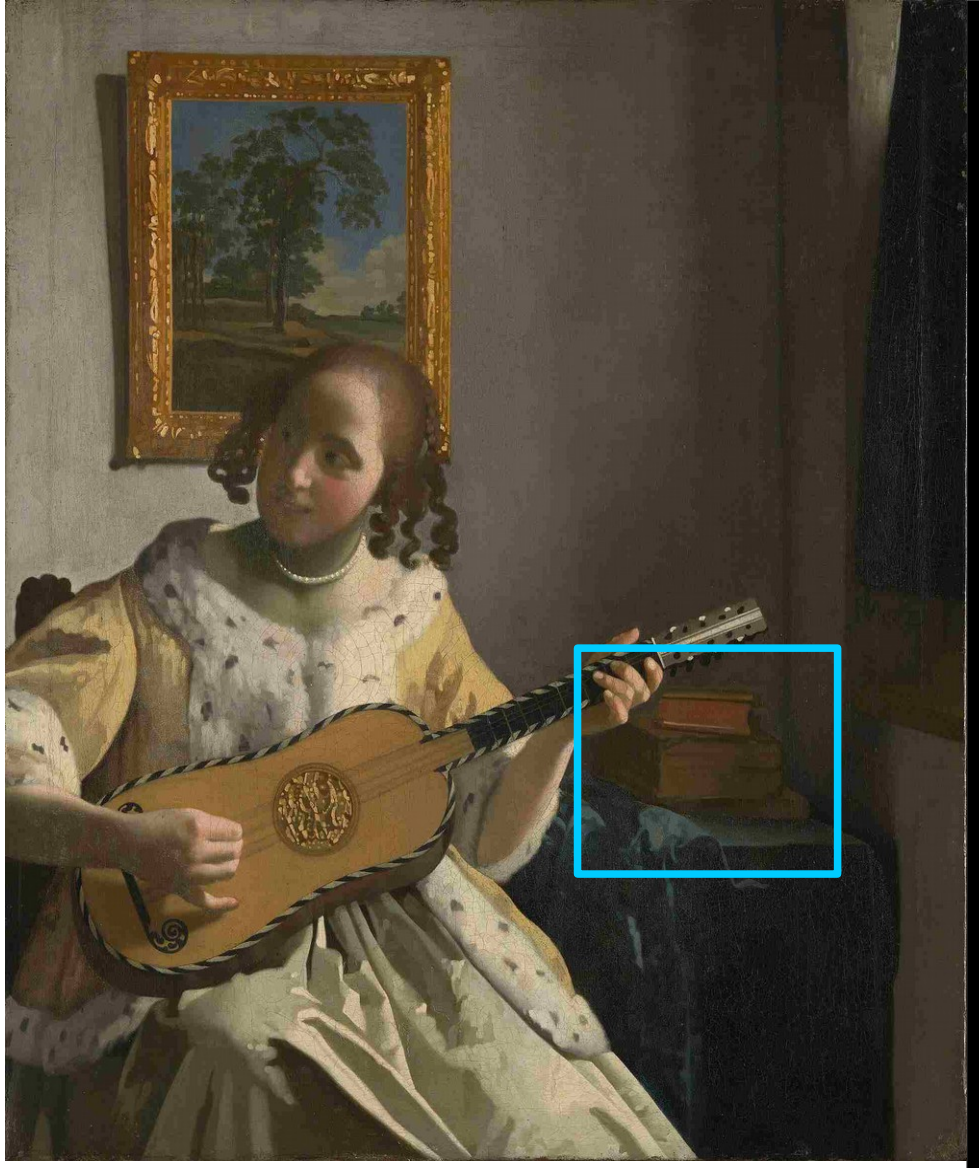
...and oblivious to the dangers that lurk and prowl...



Vermeer, *Woman with a pearl necklace*

Vermeer, *Young woman playing a guitar*

Distracted, the nation disregards the lessons of History...



Vermeer, *Young woman playing a guitar*

the lessons of History...

the lessons of History...

Early 16th century. Bosch warns about the consequences of corruption promoted by the Austrian Habsburgs.

the lessons of History...

Mid-16th century. Bruegel advocates a cautious insurrection to fight the Spanish branch of the Habsburgs.

the lessons of History...

First half of the 17th century. Rembrandt calls for patriotic unity between Protestants and Catholics.

the lessons of History...

Second half of the 17th century. Vermeer is especially suspicious of France and calls for national awareness.

the lessons of History...

Johannes Vermeer understood the lessons of History.
In 1672 Louis XIV attacked, and the Dutch Golden Age came to an end.

The end

Credits

written and directed by Johannes Vermeer
researched and edited by Paulo Martins Oliveira
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Peter van der Velde, *Raid on the Medway* (det.), Rijksmuseum
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Marshal´s batons [Musée de l'Armée], photo by ArsusGomz at
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After Lefebvre, *Portrait of Louis XIV* (det.), Palace of Versailles
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[video version April 2026; this pdf version May 2026]